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The flu is a serious illness, and the 2009 H1N1 virus is a serious flu virus. Here in the 5th district, we know that people have concerns about keeping themselves and their families safe and healthy. On this page, we've compiled some basic information for you and have also provided links to more comprehensive resources.

The H1N1 virus spreads among people easily and is affecting younger people disproportionately, specifically persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old. Other target groups include pregnant women, people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age, healthcare and emergency medical services personnel, and people ages of 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.

Vaccines are recommended for all these groups.

Beginning Saturday, October 24, Chicago residents in the target demographics may visit one of six Chicago-area clinics for free shots, including Wright College in the 5th district. Though free vaccination clinics are available, city health officials urge those who have personal physicians to go to them for vaccinations.

Wright College is located at 4300 N. Narragansett Ave. Beginning Oct. 24, vaccinations will be offered every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and every Tuesday and Thursday from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. [For details and the other Chicago locations click here.](#)

[Those living in Illinois outside Chicago can click here for vaccine location information.](#)

Symptoms of H1N1 Flu

- H1N1 is a different strain of influenza than the traditional season flu. The symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to seasonal flu, but may include additional symptoms such as **vomiting and diarrhea**

- **Symptoms of Seasonal and H1N1 Flu:**

Seasonal Flu

H1N1 Flu

All types of flu can cause:

Fever

Coughing and/or sore throat

Runny or stuffy nose

Headaches and/or body aches

Chills

Fatigue

Similar to seasonal flu, but symptoms may be more severe.

There may be additional symptoms. A significant number of H1N1 flu cases:

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Emergency Warning Signs - If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care.

Emergency warning signs in children:

Emergency warning signs in adults:

Fast breathing or trouble breathing

Bluish or gray skin color

Not drinking enough fluids

Severe or persistent vomiting

Not waking up or not interacting

Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held

Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen

Sudden dizziness

Confusion

Severe or persistent vomiting

Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

If someone you know is experiencing these symptoms, please refer to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's instructions on how to care for a sick person, including a list of over-the-counter medication that can help lessen symptoms.

[How to Care for a Sick Person](#)

In addition, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers the following advice to remain healthy:

- Stay home if you get sick. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

On the federal government's [flu.gov](https://www.flu.gov) site you can also find specific advice for:

- [Seniors](#)
- [Families](#)
- [School policies](#)

[The Center for Disease Control's Web site also has an FAQ that can help answer additional questions](#)

Should you need phone assistance, there is a hotline you may contact. For English, call (866) 848-2094 and for Español, call (866) 241-2138. Please also feel free to call our Chicago office at (773) 267-5926.